

Vol. 2.]

DECEMBER, 1848.

[No. 12.

THE

# CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

**Religious and Literary Magazine.**

A. W. McCCLURE, EDITOR.

I WILL stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.—*Hab. ii. 1.*

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.

NO. 21 CORNHILL.

1848.

ADLER FORBES, PRINTER, 27 CORNHILL.

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## TERMS.

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JOHN V. BEANE & CO., PUBLISHERS,  
No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

## SPECIAL NOTICES.

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THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the **CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY**, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the coöperation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the **OBSERVATORY**, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasoning as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

*Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.*

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THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,  
21 *Cornhill, Boston.*

THE  
**CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.**

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**VOL. II.**

**DECEMBER, 1848.**

**No. 12.**

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**DIVINE RIGHT OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT.**

Is there any one form of church government sanctioned by divine authority?

It is not the point to be discussed, whether churches organized under different forms are to be recognized as true churches of Jesus Christ. Why may there not be true churches having in a greater or less degree unscriptural external forms, as well as true churches holding to some extent unscriptural doctrines, or countenancing some unscriptural practices? Though a church has not yet come to be "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," it may nevertheless be recognized and held in fellowship as a true church of Christ. There is, then, nothing proscriptive, nothing arrogant, in the doctrine of a definite form of church government by divine right. It does indeed claim, that one form is better than other, has higher authority, and works out better results. But it utters no anathema upon such as have adopted other forms. It only offers to show unto them a more excellent way, still holding out to them the hand of charity, whether they adopt that way, or reject it.

Nor does this position demand an express precept or example from Scripture for every circumstance, and every individual measure, which may be adopted in the ordering of God's house. If specific directions were required for all the ever-varying exigencies which arise, the world could not contain the books, that should be written. The Bible supposes, that there will be intelligence and discretion in the church, and allows scope for their exercise. If it authorizes the appointment of specific officers in

the church, it does not prescribe their number, nor the exact time or manner in which they shall be elected. If it gives to any class of men the power of discipline, it nowhere enjoins the exact process, by which the trial of the accused shall be conducted, nor is this at all necessary. If all the great principles of church government are given us, there is implied of course all the authority requisite for their practical application. If God requires a church, or the officers of a church, to discipline an offending brother, that requirement comprehends in itself the right to summon him before them, and to order all the measures necessary for the discovery of his guilt, or his innocence. If you ask, who have the right to govern the church, to what matters their authority extends, and by what principles and for what purposes it is to be executed, the doctrine of church government by divine right sends you for an answer, not to the wisdom of men, not to the logic of an ever-changing expediency, but to the Word of God ; promising, that you shall there learn all which is needful and profitable, " that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished to every good work."

With this interpretation of the doctrine, which the current state of feeling on the subject requires to be made, we proceed to offer some arguments, in proof of the doctrine of the divine right of some one form of church government.

I. The very nature of a Christian church implies and demands it. The church is the kingdom of Christ. It is an external and visible kingdom. And although this external organization does not correspond entirely, in respect to its membership, with his invisible and spiritual kingdom, it is nevertheless true, that Christ's interest in this world is represented mainly in an external visible organization. And into this organization every servant of Christ on earth is summoned to enter ; to confess Christ before men, to come out from the world and be separate. And they who do not obey this summons, are presumed to belong to the kingdom of Satan. There is this great value attached to the organized church of Christ. It is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. It is his kingdom. Now is there not an absurdity in the supposition of a kingdom, left by its sovereign without any prescribed system of administration, with no authorized principles of government, no subordinate rulers having any ascertained prerogatives or any definite measure of jurisdiction, a kingdom left to grow

into such a shape, and be ruled after such a fashion, as chance, or caprice, or the selfish artifice of cunning men may happen to prescribe? What sort of a kingdom is that, the subjects of which receive from their monarch but this single command, to be meekly subject to any form of government to which the heavings of an universal chaos shall give birth? If the King in Zion has given no definite constitution to his church, then, having ascended to heaven, and speaking no more in a voice which men can hear, he has abandoned the church which he bought with his blood, and which he loves as the apple of his eye, to be alternately swept over by the floods of anarchy, and trodden down by the heel of despotism. He is a king who neither governs his kingdom himself, nor proclaims the principles upon which, nor the agents by whom, he will have it governed. We can escape the absurdity of this supposition only in the conclusion, that there is some system of church government constituted by divine right.

If you deny the old notion, that a Christian is bound to submit himself to the form of church government, whatever it is, which he finds established over him, then the nature of a church demands a government by divine right, if possible, more imperatively still. For if a Christian's conscience does not bind him, in this matter, to be in subjection to the powers that be, and if the Scriptures prescribe no definite system by which he shall be guided, then where will you find any lawful authority that can be applied to his case at all? If you attempt to apply to him any principles of church government whatever, why may he not reply, and reply with truth: "These principles are only the suggestions of your discretion. I deny their wisdom. I refuse their authority. Christ has established no form of church government. By what right are you to stretch the rod of your power over my conscience?" In this attitude every Christian may stand, and everything having the semblance of church government may be annihilated in an hour. And it ought to be annihilated. There can be no lawful church government, which has not its basis in the doctrine of divine right. The attempt to exercise any such government is a usurpation and a sacrilege. You have no right to apply a single principle to the government of Christ's servants, which cannot be exercised by Christ's express sanction. Thus the very nature of a church demands, that it shall be governed by divine right, or that it shall not be governed at all.

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II. A church government by divine right is indispensable to secure Christian men from ecclesiastical despotism. The quality which Milton calls "popeness," is the natural growth of the human heart. Under the eye of Christ himself, in the embryo church of twelve members, who in their poverty, like their master, had not where to lay their heads, there was, not only a secret ambition, but an open and eager strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. If the policy of the church had not been settled by divine right, Peter would willingly have accepted the popedom, and so would James, and even the gentle-hearted John would not have refused it. And dim indeed must be his vision, whose unjaundiced eye ranges along among throned and surpliced hierarchies, or turns its glance upon the brotherly and apostolic strifes of an untitled eldership, or searches even in the bosom of obscure and fragmentary churches which can hardly furnish members sufficient to form the materials of opposing parties, and yet does not see the scowling form and hear the arrogant voice of an incipient *popeness* muttering its anathemas, and grasping after the preëminence. And this indigenous *popeness* manifests the more rapid growth, because, in profession, and oftentimes in sincerity, it seeks the glory of God. The man of an honest and eager soul believes, that the priceless interests of religion are actually enfolded in the ends he wishes to accomplish, and therefore conscientiously and sometimes even with a martyr's zeal he grasps the sceptre from the hand of Zion's king, and lords it over God's heritage. Popery itself grew up in no small measure by successive assumptions of power and prerogative, which in those times of general darkness and confusion, seemed to be favorable to the interests of humanity and religion. And the sincere persuasion, that the interests of religion could be no where so safe as in their own hands, has, perhaps, generally been the grand consideration acknowledged to their own consciences, by the men, who, in consistories, or churches, or benevolent associations, have laid their fingers on the triple crown, and desired to usurp a lordship over the freeborn brotherhood of Christ's kingdom.

He, who as a brother, only thought himself worthy to be first in the brotherhood, as a bishop, assumes to be the dispenser of all grace; and as pope, exalteth himself above all that is called God, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Where now shall the Christian church

find security against these conscientious, progressive, and finally conscience-crushing assumptions of ecclesiastical power? If the principles of church government are not in the Bible, if the ordering of God's house is left to be determined by the mere suggestions of expediency, and the honest, or as may chance to prove, the bribed discretion of mercenary men, by what weapons shall the flock of God be defended from the plausible encroachments of an unjust domination? What shall hinder but that policy and present seeming advantage, may furnish the means by which God's freeborn family shall be ruled into bondage to the elements of this present world? Where shall we have the least security for the rights of the individual or the rights of the church, against the domination of those, who, whether it be rightfully, or otherwise, happen at this moment to hold in their fingers, the keys of the kingdom? The Puritans of old were denounced as schismatics for refusing submission to the despotic discipline of an unrelenting hierarchy. They were required to be obedient to the discretionary regulations of those who carried the keys at their girdle, on pain of the pillory and the dungeon. It behooved them to bring irrefutable arguments against the assertions of their adversaries, as well as to "bethink themselves, how they might refute the Clink and the Gate-house." They then denied the authority of human discretion, to prescribe rules or methods for the government of God's house. They planted themselves at once on this great principle, that "church government is prescribed in the gospel." The divine right of church government was the only doctrine, by which Christian liberty could be vindicated then. It is the only doctrine, by which it can be vindicated now. If human discretion may shape the government of the church in any important feature, and has the divine sanction in so doing, it may go on shaping it more and more, according to its own invention, until it has again chained up Christ's living body, in the iron frame of a popedom. Just as far as human discretion, patristical tradition, or canon law, has ever been permitted to mould the form of church government, so far has it tended to the destruction of that liberty, wherewith Christ makes his people free. We venture then the assertion in naked terms, that the doctrine of church government by divine right is the only effectual protection of the churches, and of their individual members, from the encroachments of spiritual despotism.

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III. It is essential also to the recovery of unity in the Christian church. The division of the Christian world into rival sects results, in a very great measure, from conflicting views of church government. If these conflicting views could be harmonized, what would there be left to hinder the merging of almost all the prominent denominations usually termed evangelical into one? The diversities of opinion in reference to didactic theology, are often as great in the bosom of one denomination, as between the members of different denominations. And there is nothing in the nature of the case to prevent these diversities from being gradually modified, and insensibly approximating to a perfect harmony. But questions of church organization set their face immediately against men's love of power and preëminence, threatening to wrest the keys of the kingdom from the hands which claim the right to hold them. There are, and always must be, considerations of direct personal interest involved in questions which respect external church organization. Shall the bishops rule? Shall the elders rule? Shall the brotherhood rule? When all selfishness is eradicated from the hearts of good men, and not till then, may these matters be investigated with an unbiassed desire on all sides to discover among them, and adopt with one consent, the more excellent way. If then expediency, human discretion, the reasonings of wise men, are to shape the pattern of the house of God, what result can be expected, but that every order of architecture shall be perpetually piled together in one unshapely and heterogeneous mass? If the house of God shall ever cease to be divided against itself, if the jealousies and bickerings, and mutual jostlings and depredations of rival sects are ever to come to an end, and Christ's universal church is ever to present to the world a visible and entire unity, such as the world can see and understand, if there is ever to be a unity which shall array the sacramental host of God's elect with one undivided front against the powers of darkness, that blessed result must be attained by bringing all these conflicting forms and organizations to the test of one authoritative standard. It is not the characteristic of men to reason themselves into an universal unity in the teeth of their cherished prepossessions and personal interests. They must hear the voice of God prescribing the pattern of his church; and come all to be one, by accepting altogether a form of church government by divine right.

IV. That church government is of divine right, all its essential principles being contained in the Scriptures, will be very evident, if we examine the Scriptures themselves, and learn their testimony on the subject. The main purpose of the epistles to Timothy is, to give instruction in reference to the organization and government of the Christian church. The writer explicitly unfolds the duties and rights of church officers, the proper treatment of offences, and the relative obligations of the members. Having these inspired directions in his hands, in addition to what he had previously learned from the Scriptures, was Timothy sufficiently instructed in reference to the principles and methods of church government and discipline? If not, then was Paul himself deficient, both in wisdom and in truth, who furnished these instructions for that express purpose, and declared to Timothy, in direct allusion to them, "Thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God which is the church of the living God." And if Timothy could find in the Scriptures all needful rules for the constitution and discipline of churches, then may we also do the same, if we will let alone the expedients of a fluctuating and bewildered policy, and dare to trust in the unerring wisdom of God. And for our encouragement in this behalf, as well as his, he has again assured us in the most decisive terms that all "Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." It is sufficient for the purposes alike of doctrine and of discipline, and that in no doubtful or stinted measure, but in such precision and abundance, "that the man of God, may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Nor has the apostle left it optional with us, nor even with Timothy, his own son in the faith, whether to abide implicitly by the pattern given us for the ordering of God's house, or to mar it by the arrogant intermeddling of a purblind discretion. Having instructed him how to behave himself in the house of God, he forbids all resort to methods of government, which are not of divine right. "I charge thee in the sight of God, and before the Lord Jesus Christ, — that thou keep this commandment without spot, unreprovable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." Not without reason may we listen to the warning voice of the stern old reprobate: "Who is he so arrogant, so presumptuous, that durst dispose and guide the living ark of the Holy Ghost, though

he should find it wandering in the field of Bethshemesh, without the conscious warrant of some high calling? Let them make shews of reforming, while they will, so long as the church is mounted upon their cart,—it will but shake and totter, and he that sets to his hand, though with a good intent, to hinder the shogging of it in this unlawful waggonry wherein it rides, let him beware it be not fatal to him as it was to Uzza."

This general assertion by the Bible of the sufficiency of its own instructions for the government of the church, is readily verified by an examination of those instructions themselves. Do we wish to learn, what officers are authorized in the church, and what are their respective functions? The sacred oracle is by no means dumb to our inquiries. We venture to say to the readers of the Bible, that there is no single topic, which occupies a greater space on the pages of the New Testament, than that of the ministerial office. They read of the election of ministers, of their commission, their ordination, their qualifications, their duties, their authority. There are incidental allusions, historical records, and formal instructions, touching the office of a bishop, and the office of a deacon. They are set before us in their private life, in their pastoral work, in the grand ecclesiastical council. If we cannot settle the question of church officers by divine authority, it must be because, either the Bible is a blind book, or we are blind readers of it. What though after all there have been discordant opinions and eager controversies among good men upon this subject? Have there not also been equally discordant opinions, and equally eager controversies, with reference to almost every doctrine of revelation? And do we, therefore, conclude, that there is no divine right to be urged in behalf of the doctrine of atonement, or that of regeneration, or that of a judgment to come? On no subject perhaps, are the passions and interests of men more concerned, biassing their minds to an unconscious misinterpretation of the Scriptures, than this of the ministerial office. But let not the glittering of mitres, nor the tumultuous hailstorm of angry controversy, make us blind to the sunlight of God's own radiant word.

Do we then desire instruction which shall prescribe the lawful method of discipline in the church of God? Its chief pastor has given us directions, not only divinely authorized, but remarkably definite and even circumstantial. These directions are not

intended merely for such, as have skill in applying general principles to an endless variety of occasions, but they are designed to be minute rules of conduct to every member of the household of faith whose brother may chance to trespass against him. Are the rules laid down in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew incomprehensible? If not, the mode of discipline there prescribed, is of divine right. The first and second steps there enjoined, no Christian man can disregard without sin. And no more can any Christian man disregard the third step there enjoined, without sin, "Tell it to the church." We are not concerned here, to discuss what is meant by the church, whether it is to be found within a Jesuit confessor's whispering box, or under a bishop's robe, or at the consistorial bench, or in a congregation of faithful men. Something our Saviour assuredly meant by the term *church*. He did not use it as a word without signification, and when he said of a brother's trespass, "Tell it to the church," he prescribed by divine right, the only lawful process of church discipline.

Do we desire to know, further, how the government of the church is to be conducted in the final result of trespass unrepented of? We are sufficiently instructed by divine authority, how we ought to behave ourselves in the house of God. It is first to be tried, whether he will hear the church; which implies, that the church shall use endeavors to make him hear. Whether those endeavors are unavailing, who can decide with authority, except the church which made them? If he, then, neglect to hear the church, and the church hath so declared, he holds no longer a place in the household of faith. "Let him be unto thee, as a heathen man, and a publican." Here you have from the lips of Christ himself both the method and the limit of church government. Jesus Christ esteemed this specific and prescribed order of government to be sufficient. Who, then, shall make bold to interpose his daring discretion, and to new model the work of Christ; alleging "that all this will not fadge, until it be cunningly interpolished by some second hand, with crooks and emendations?"

And how this final and most awful exercise of church government was designed to be carried into effect, we learn by the example of the faithful brethren at Corinth, who obeyed the apostolic injunction: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan;" to

exclude him from the kingdom of Christ, which is his church, and pronounce him to be in the kingdom of Satan, the god of this world. This is to be done with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, the authority given by him in his own prescribed rule of discipline. And what less can all this be, than a definite mode of church government, and that by divine right? We quote again the language of Milton: "So exquisite and lively is the description, in portraying the state of the church, especially in those points where government seems to be most active, that God never intended to leave the government thereof to be patched afterwards, and varnished over with the devices, and embellishings of men's imagination."

We forbear to enlarge upon the inferences, which this conclusion invites us to draw. Some of them, we will briefly indicate.

We can without difficulty decide respecting the propriety of the use of canons, and standards and by-laws, in the government of the church. They may do good service by bringing into a condensed and compact form the great principles of the Bible. If they go beyond this, if they arrogate to themselves, any authority, or impose any commands not sustained by the distinct sanction of the Scriptures, they are usurpers. "The book, *the book*;" yes, THE BOOK! There is but one book, that can rightfully bind the consciences of men. There is no legislative power in the church. Its laws are enacted in heaven, where the king of Zion holds his royal state. "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."

Let it not be esteemed an evidence of illiberality, when we venture to say also, that it ought not to be considered a matter of indifference, what form of church government we adopt for ourselves, and propagate among our Christian brethren. The tendency to corruption is exceedingly strong. The pride and ambition of men's hearts, work towards their end by exceedingly subtle measures. No ark will bear us so safely through these floods, as the ark of which God has himself given us the model. What right have we to depart from the instructions of the Bible in this matter, more than in any other? We are settled in the conviction, that authorized church government is very definite as to its ends, and very simple as to its operation, and very limited as to its province. There is no great complicated system of ecclesiastical machinery portrayed in the Bible. A church is to

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be provided with officers sufficient for the maintainance of its order and the celebration of its appointed worship and ordinances, and has authority to separate from itself those members who prove unworthy of its fellowship. Very little government is necessary. The legitimate end of discipline is, to reclaim the wanderer ; or, if he will not be reclaimed, to clear the church from the dishonor of having fellowship with wicked members. Discipline is awful, because God's voice is in it; but it comprehends, by right, no penalty from human hands, no anathema upon the subject of it, no infamy upon his character as a man, no inquisition, no Smith-field. These are the appurtenances of a church government by human right, and all tend to defeat the divine end of discipline, by making churches of a peaceful temper shrink from administering discipline, and by hardening the subject of it whenever it is administered. God's system is always the wisest, and the most effectual ; and when it shall come to be universally prevalent, and the church universal shall come to be armed with a living and internal energy, and adorned with a perfect external beauty, then shall she "look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

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### THE LAST CHAPTER OF UNITARIANISM.

IN the preceding numbers of this volume of our work, will be found a series of independent articles on American Unitarianism, which, taken together, will afford a complete historical view of the origin and progress of that heresy in New England. In the present article, we propose to conclude what we had to say upon the subject, by bringing down its records to the present time.

The first foundations of the celebrated theological school at Andover were laid by funds which had been originally destined to the use of Harvard College ; but which the pious donor applied to a different purpose, when the perversion of that college from its original design and character became fully evident. The establishment of the Andover seminary, and the erection of the Park Street Church in Boston, were some of the first sea-walls which put a stop to the insidious and undermining progress of

Unitarianism, and reclaimed much of the soil it had washed away. From that time, a rapid change has been going on in eastern Massachusetts, tending to restore the purity and life of the primitive evangelical faith. Already has it become difficult to realize how complete was the sway of Unitarianism in this region less than thirty years ago. It seemed then to be almost a necessary qualification for civil office. It had nearly monopolized the legal profession. The wealth of the community was in its pockets. Almost every important pulpit was occupied by its champions. It had a sort of censorship of the press. In short, it managed every thing in its own way. Orthodoxy was almost unknown, and shockingly unfashionable ; while Unitarianism claimed all the literature and refinement as its exclusive property.

How great is the change which has taken place in a single generation ! Unitarianism is still strong in numbers, wealth, and talent. But it has quite lost its once unrivalled preponderance. It has ceased to be formidable. It has become spiritless and languishing, and can never again be what it has been. Its haughty tone is lowered ; and for some time past, it has worn an apologetic air, and has an aspect of extreme dissatisfaction with itself. The hue of health is changed to a hectic flush, the sure indication of incurable decline. Meanwhile the various evangelical denominations have been steadily increasing in numbers and influence, till several of them have become nearly or quite as strong as Unitarianism ever was. They have been advancing, while it has remained comparatively stationary, and thus has mostly lost its relative importance.

In seeking for the causes of this change, it will be in vain to ascribe it to the growth of population and business. This of itself, would rather have helped to swell the resources of Unitarianism. The real cause of the change is to be found *in the blessing of God upon religious controversy*. Perhaps there has never been a more signal instance of the benefits of controversy, excepting the explosion of Arianism in the ancient church, and of popery in the North of Europe.

It is unnecessary here to repeat the results of the open disclosure of Unitarianism in 1815, after it had been working so long and so vigorously in concealment. We need not recapitulate the labors of Doctors Morse and Worcester, and the conductors of the "Panoplist" in putting an end to this scandalous game, the most

profitable that Unitarianism has ever played, and which it has always carried on wherever it has gained an establishment. There is no occasion to recite the world-renowned deeds of Professors Woods and Stuart in this great argument, nor to rehearse the powerful discussions by Doctors Griffin and Beecher in the pulpits of Boston. These, and many other men of might, who bravely bore up the standard of the truth in this hard-contested field, contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints ; and God was with them. The revival of religion bore a divine attestation to the truth as it is in Christ, and most powerfully conduced to effect a revolution in public sentiment.

But among the means which contributed the most to this result, we ascribe very high importance to the "Spirit of the Pilgrims," commenced at Boston, in 1828. This monthly magazine, ably conducted by Rev. Dr. Pond, at once produced a strong sensation. It was called into existence in consequence of the strenuous efforts of the Unitarians to retain that supremacy which they saw to be departing from them. The press teemed with their pamphlets, occasional and periodical, abounding in the most confident assertions of their liberality and illumination, and imputing to the orthodox the sourest bigotry and the most offensive sentiments. The misrepresentations of orthodoxy were so gross and incessant as to be intolerable ; and a work which should boldly meet and expose these misrepresentations had become "a necessary of life." The first effect of the appearance of the "Spirit of the Pilgrims" was to raise a perfect polemical tempest. The controversial zeal of the Unitarians was roused to the utmost rage of desperation, and the whole face of the deep chafed and foamed with excitement. A very few years however, witnessed a remarkable change, which continues in great measure to this day.

Among other results of the publication of that magazine, we find that it brought out a great variety of facts as to the inglorious origin of American Unitarianism, having its rise in studied concealment, the enemy sowing tares while men slept. This origin often reminds us of an expression in that hot thunderbolt against all false teachers, the epistle of Jude ; "There are certain men crept in unawares." It also reminds us of a comment on the passage by good old Thomas Fuller : "Crept in, shewing the slownesse of their pace, and the lownesse of their posture. The latter proceeding partly from their guiltinesse, not daring to go

upright, to justify, avouch, or maintain their doctrine; partly out of policy to work themselves in the more invisibly. But these creepers at first, turned flyers afterwarde, 'flying serpents' being no contradiction. Isai. xxx. 6."

The "Spirit of the Pilgrims" did much to clear away from the orthodox doctrines the false statements and unjustifiable inferences with which many sought to identify them. In particular, the old and pertinacious slander, that the orthodox believe in the damnation of infants, was most effectually exploded.

That magazine also did excellent service in vindicating the rights of our churches, which had been wrested away by various decisions in the courts, each of them based on grounds different from those of the previous decisions. The discussions in its pages virtually settled the question as to those legal rights. Those old decisions cannot stand much longer; and some which have been recently made, render it more than doubtful, whether another case will ever terminate like those of the Dedham and West Brookfield churches.

The periodical of which we speak had been at work but little more than a year, before the Unitarians became as sick of controversy as they had been eager for it. They began to "sigh and cry" over its evils, as well they might, for it brought no triumphs to them. They almost sued for peace. Their spirit was subdued. Their pride was broken down. It had become too evident that they had not all the learning and talent on their side. They grew strangely patient and submissive. Since 1832, they have, for the most part, suffered the orthodox to speak as freely as they pleased, without contradiction.

Another result effected by the "Spirit of the Pilgrims" was, that it constrained the Unitarians to avow their disbelief of the inspired character of the Bible. They acknowledged, before the controversy closed, that they did not receive the whole Bible as the word of God, but only such parts of it as seemed reasonable in their sight. The simple explanation of this is, that the whole Bible is a thoroughly orthodox book; and all the arts and tricks of rationalist interpretation, must fail to make any thing else of it, unless it may be dismembered, and discarded in portions, at the interpreter's pleasure.

The "Spirit of the Pilgrims" having accomplished these great results, fulfilled its work and desisted. Unitarianism having

abandoned controversy and the Bible, and declining all further contest, and keeping cautiously out of the field, there was no more occasion to maintain an armament against it, and orthodoxy was "reduced to a peace establishment."

It remains for us to notice the recent division in the Unitarian ranks. A line of demarkation has been drawn, as Theodore Parker says, "not wide as yet, but very deep." The reckless "progressists," as they call themselves, care not if it were quite as wide as it is deep. But the conservative sort, whose frozen fingers still cling to the icy mass of old-fashioned Unitarianism, tremble as they hang over the dreadful chasm; and would fain have a little help from their pitying orthodox brethren to place them more securely on believing ground. The transcendentalists, bewildered with the dim and unhallowed theories of pantheism, and mad with revolutionary fury, are a sore tribulation to their brethren of the older sort, who are afraid to "drive them out." They are "pricks in their eyes" and "thorns in their sides," to "vex them in the land wherein they dwell." These visionary speculatists are so wrapt up in self-conceit and self-adoration, that there is far less hope of them, as to their ever being converted to the common sense orthodoxy and vital piety of the gospel, than of the older stock. But of these, the prospect of their recovery to spiritual life and truth must remain far from cheering, so long as they continue to discard the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. After all, the difference between them and the transcendentalists is rather in degree, than in kind. Both classes arbitrarily reject some portions of the Bible from being of divine authority, only the one class extends this liberty much farther than the other. The question between them is not at all vital and generic; but merely relates to the extent to which they shall make "a discrimination between the divine and the human in the records of the Christian religion." In their treatment of the Bible, the older sort in part *explain* it away, and in part *throw* it away; the more recent sort save themselves the trouble of explanation, and throw it away almost altogether.

Though in our view one party is quite as liable, in its principles, to the charge of infidelity as the other, yet to the more devout and serious portion of the Unitarians the difference seems to be very great indeed; and they cannot reconcile themselves to the thought of forsaking the Christian name, or of being leagued in

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ecclesiastical alliance with those who virtually do. Not a few of them have betrayed their secret longings to be no more recognized as a distinct sect, and to be silently amalgamated with the Christian community around them. They once looked with pride upon the glittering ice-palace which they had reared on the congealed waters of rationalism, and which stood glorious in the wintry moon-light. But now, with feelings of profoundest melancholy, they see it melting on the one side before the fierce bonfires of an innovating crew ; and on the other, stealing away under the genial rays of the sun of the gospel. May God hasten the day of its utter dissolution, and urge them to fly for sanctuary to the temple of truth, which stands eternally on the rock of ages !

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### THE BIBLE IN THE CONVENTS.

ALL the Benedictines were expected to learn the Psalter by heart, and their rules required special pains to be used in this behalf. Thus Pachomius says : “ There shall be nobody whatever in the monastery who will not learn to read, and get some part of the Scriptures by heart ; at least the New Testament and Psalter.” St. Basil directs that such as neglect to commit the Psalms to memory shall be shut up in solitude, or kept fasting, till they do. St. Ferreol declares, that “ no one who claims the name of a monk can be allowed to be ignorant of letters : moreover, he must know all the Psalms by heart.” To be sure there were some weak brethren for whom this was too much. The biographer of Odo, abbot of Clugni, tells us, that, in his time, in compassion to such, fourteen psalms were deducted from the original number of one hundred and thirty-eight, which the monks were required to repeat daily. No doubt, there may have been many who fell far in arrears as to this daily reckoning : just as in our own colleges, notwithstanding the thorough courses of study required, a dunce is a phenomenon not so rare as could be wished. No doubt too, that many monasteries came short of the noble example of Clugni, which they essayed to copy : and others again may have grossly deteriorated from their first zeal in the matter. But, making all such allowances, it is not easy to see how the great body of the

monks could have escaped the acquisition of some considerable knowledge of the Scriptures.

Among the more rigid sect of the White Friars, or Cistercians, there was a like ardor in the reading of the Word of God. In the year 1195, Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, when travelling in France, went to visit a very old monk at Cistercium or Clairvaux, St. Bernard's famous monastery, and the mother-house of the Cistercian order. This old monk had been a high ecclesiastic, but having laid aside all but the insignia of his rank, which the pope required him to retain, he devoted himself in that retreat to sacred contemplation. When the bishop of Lincoln asked him what part of the Bible chiefly occupied his mind, he replied : "I am now almost wholly absorbed in the meditation of the Psalms alone." And who was this good old saint ? we are eager to ask. It was Jean aux Bellemains, archbishop of Lyons !— the same who excommunicated that Peter Waldo, from whom the interesting community of Waldenses is said to derive its name, though, indeed it is much older than he.

In the course of time, we are aware, that the corruption which was fated to spread among all the monastic orders, entered the cells of the rigid Cistercians : and at last many of them seem to have cut down the daily recitation of the whole Psalter to the repetition of seven verses. This we gather from a queer tale which we found among the notes to Erasmus's "Encomium of Folly." The story goes, that the devil falling in with blessed Bernard, bragged that he knew of seven versicles in David's Psalms, which if any man were to recite every day of his life, it would be impossible that he should not get to heaven. Bernard insisted that the devil should point them out to him : and when the malicious fiend refused, Bernard said : " You shall gain nothing by your refusal, for I will daily repeat the entire Psalter, and so your seven verses must come among the rest." The demon, frightened at the thought of giving occasion to a work so immensely good, preferred to indicate his seven wonderful verses. And so, adds the cynical Hollander, for this prodigious benefit, which so much exceeds anything we read of in the gospel, we are indebted to the evil demon.

When monstery was in its prime, few of the fraternity would have thanked the devil for this labor-saving contrivance. " All Scripture " was their study. In the seventy-third chapter of his

rule, St. Benedict taught his followers to ask: "What page, or what discourse, of the divine authority of the Old and the New Testament, is not the most accurate rule of human life?"

About the year 1170, Geoffry, sub-prior of St. Barbara, in Normandy, wrote a letter to Peter Mangot, a monk of Baugercy who had obtained permission to build a Cistercian monastery. This is a letter of advice and encouragement, and closes thus: "A cloister without a library is like a castle without an armory. Our library is our armory. Thence we take the armor of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. See to it, therefore, in your armory of defence, that that which is the great defence of all the other defences is not wanting. That defence is the Holy Bible, wherein is contained the right rule of life and manners. There each sex and every age finds what is profitable. There spiritual infancy finds that whereby it may grow, youth that which may strengthen it, age that which may support it,—a blessed hand which ministers to all that whereby all may be saved. If, therefore, you have taken care to provide the arms for this warfare, you will have nothing to do but to say to him: 'Take thine arms and thy shield, and arise to my help.' Farewell! and take care that the Bible, which no monastery should be without, is bought."

The famous Peter Abelard, in the twelfth century, though himself an elegant classical scholar, was for banishing all the profane poets from the studies of Christians, that they might give themselves wholly to the holy Scriptures. His sixth letter exhorts Heloisa's nuns at Paraclete to study, and become capable of reading and understanding, the holy Scriptures in the original tongues. The letter is, in a manner, made up of passages on the subject from Jerome's letter to the girl, Laeta. It congratulates the nuns on their happiness in having such a learned abbess as was able to teach them Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, the languages necessary to obtain a right understanding of the Scriptures. He advises them to have recourse to the original text, which is the foundation of all versions. He presses this counsel upon them in a manner which shows that he was in earnest, and that the thing was feasible.

Here, if space permitted, we should like to digress a little upon the cultivation of secular literature by the monks, for which the

Benedictines, in particular, became famous. It would be amusing to state some of the queer reasons they adopted from Origen and Jerome to excuse such pursuits, which seemed to be inconsistent with the rigor of their rule. In their fondness for silence they communicated, as far as possible, by signs. When a monk wanted a book, he must hold out his hand, and make the motion of turning over leaves. He must then make other signs to indicate the particular book wanted. Thus there were distinct signs for the Gospels, the Psalter, the Missal, and others. But if he wanted a book having a heathen for its author, he had to scratch his ear as a dog does with his foot when he itches there ; "because not undeservedly are the infidels likened to such animals." A nice hint as to monastic ideas on such subjects !

We intended also to have spoken of the vast number of Bibles, and parts of the Bible, copied by the conventional scribes. Though there have been immense destructions of their labors by the ravages of war, by desolating fires, by malice, by fraud, by neglect on the part of the keepers, and by the necessary decays of time, yet such manuscripts still exist in great numbers. A single nun, Diemudis, of Wessobrun in Bavaria, in the time of Gregory VII., who became pope in 1073, besides an almost incredible number of copies of devotional and theological works, wrote several entire Bibles, "to the praise of God, and of the holy apostles, Peter and Paul, the patrons of her convent." But space fails us for entering into such details.

The old Clugniacs, when travelling, were wont to beguile the whole distance with chanting the Psalms in order, partly to prevent evil thoughts and vain discourse. No weariness of the way, nor robber demonstrations, could check this exercise. So far did they carry their "psalm-grinding" propensity on all occasions, as to incur no small ridicule on account of it. That inspired book alone, so familiar to their lips and memories, might suffice, by the grace of God, to make them wise unto salvation.

It was also a part of our plan to instance numerous individuals, like Peter the Venerable, who were justly celebrated for their scriptural knowledge, "having both Testaments committed to memory ;" and Alcuin, "who was exercised in the whole latitude of the Scriptures ;" and even that abominable saint Dunstan, whose whole leisure, retrieved from public business, was spent in reading the Scriptures, and collating and correcting the copies.

We should like to tell of Anselm, bishop of Lucca in 1806, who “knew almost the entire Bible by heart; and, as soon as he was asked, could tell what each of the holy expositors thought on any particular passage:” and of Arnold, bishop of Soissons, who died in 1087, who devoted three years and six months, to the reading and meditation of the Word of God; during all which time, he spake never a word to a single human being. But passing over many such cases, recorded in Mabillon, we must be content with Wulphelm, abbot of Brunvillers near Cologne, who died in 1091, and who had the whole Bible read in his monastery every year; and who also has left a tetrastich which says: “Let the ecclesiastical usage be widely spread, as to the Testaments of the Almighty: and let them both be so read as to be completed every year, just as the Psalms are finished in order every week.”

Enough has been adduced to show that, amid the densest gloom of the Middle Ages, the monks had light in their Goshens, even if palpable Egyptian darkness brooded almost every where else.

But though compelled to omit so much of what relates to the subject before us, we chiefly regret, that the necessity of going into so many matters of fact, precludes us from discussing the effect of all this Bible-reading on the numberless swarms who hived in the honied cells of wealthy monastic establishments.

We wonder how it came to pass, that their familiarity with the oracles of God should have had no happier effect in enlightening their minds, and saving their souls. Those are said to be dark times; but mostly because we are, as Coleridge says, “so much in the dark about them.” Surely the monks were not all lazy “abbey-lubbers,” as Lord Bacon irreverently calls them: nor yet all the friars such bare-footed Carmelites and lousy mendicants as are jeered at by Erasmus. We fondly cherish the memory of a Huss and a Wiclit, and a few other noble confessors and martyrs of the faith, who blaze with planetary brightness along that tract of ten-fold night. But we wot not of thousands of lesser lights which rose and set behind the clouds of oblivion which hide them from our view. On the 21st of December, 1776, at Basle in Switzerland, an old building was pulled down, which had formerly been part of a Carthusian convent. In a hole made in the wall was found a wooden box, placed there, no one knows when, by a poor monk, called brother Martin. This box contained the following touching confession: “O most merciful God! I know that I

can only be saved, and satisfy thy righteousness, by the merit, the innocent suffering and death of thy well-beloved Son. Holy Jesus, my salvation is in thy hands. Thou canst not withdraw the hands of thy love from me; for they have created, and formed, and redeemed me. Thou hast inscribed my name with a pen of iron, in rich mercy, and so as nothing can efface it, on thy side, thy hands, and thy feet." This good brother, unequal to the open avowal of these truths, adds these words: "If I cannot confess these things with my tongue, I at least confess them with my pen and with my heart."

God does not summon all his faithful, to come forth and lead the work of reformation, like an Elijah and a Luther. To many who had the needful courage and fortitude, the providential opportunity they would have boldly seized, was never given. In many more, like the seven thousand in Israel who bowed not the knee to Baal, the deep obscurity of their life may have screened them alike from the scrutiny of persecution, and the recording pen of history. In others again, like poor Berengarius, the flesh was all too weak, though the spirit was willing.

" All are not strong alike through storms to steer  
Right onward. What though dread of threatened death  
And dungeon-torture made their hand and breath  
Inconstant to the truth within their heart?  
They, like the worm that gems the starless night,  
Moved in the scanty circlet of their light;  
And was it strange, if they withdrew the ray  
That did but guide the night-birds to their prey? "

Let us hope that adoring myriads are now bending around the throne of God and the Lamb, who lived and died in the faith, even where the "horror of great darkness" rolled its thickest clouds around the corrupted Church.

There would be some satisfaction, as it might serve to vindicate the life-giving power of the Bible, in tracing the reasons why its effects were not more visible in quickening the minds of the Cenobites out of that dull state of "dropping-down-deadness," which seems to have been their general characteristic before degeneracy came in like a flood, and corruption ran riot in their cloisters. It might not be amiss to shew, that the Bible was meant for men in the world; and having little adaptedness to the

cenobitic life, must have been mostly a dead letter in those unpractical retreats. It might be shown that the conventional discipline repressed all individuality, blended all who became subject to it into a uniform mass, suppressed all disposition to inquire and reform, and reduced each mind, according to the infamous Jesuit maxim, to become "as it were a corpse." It were in point too, to speak of those ages of incessant political convulsion, in which all men craved a fixed and definite faith, as the last anchor to which the peace-craving spirit of conservatism could cling. Much also might be said of the absurd system of interpretation, derived and deteriorated from Origen and Jerome, which universally prevailed; which sealed up the meaning even of an open Bible, and made its readers unaware that the Scripture, according to a wise old Puritan, "lieth not in the sound, but in the sense." The Church was long in learning, that "the meaning of the Bible is the Bible." But we refrain from any defence of that blessed book; remembering the remark of Thomas Fuller, that "the Word of God, being the sword of the Spirit, needs not the arm of flesh to defend it."

All that we learn of the Dark Ages confirms the conviction, that, as to the vast body of the Christian population, they are of right so named. We well know that there were a few brilliant gas-burners, many wax tapers, and a multitude of tallow-candles, oil-lamps, and rush-lights: but these could never have made a general illumination, much less anything like broad day, amid those centuries of moonless midnight: especially as they were for the most part hidden under beds and bushels, or dimly twinkled in solitary cells and secluded cloisters.

Such historical facts would seem to intimate that the mere reading of the Bible, without the faithful preaching and living application of the word, is not ordinarily sufficient for the revival and support of true religion. The word written and the word preached are coördinate powers, of which each is badly lamed and disabled without the other.

Yet this abundant Bible-reading within conventional walls was not wholly inoperative. It kept alive, to some extent, the sense of the evils of vice and of the shamefulness of the prevalent moral corruption. And such feelings occasionally prompted to vigorous attempts at reformation. But the reformers seldom got beyond the bounds of monastic notions. Their remedy consisted

in getting up *new orders* of monks and friars, with more austere rules and more rigid practices. And for many ages, almost the whole history of monstery consists in the rise of new and stricter orders, which in turn relaxed their discipline, and sank into the mire of ignorance and indulgence. The facilities and encouragements for getting up new orders were, all this while, "safety-valves" for letting off the spirit of reform, without exploding the whole frame-work and machinery of Romanism.

It would appear that the reading of the Bible was rather encouraged than repressed in the Roman church, till such time as the teachings of the sacred volume began to be urged against the various superstitions and false doctrines of popery. It was then discovered to be a very dangerous book, by no means to be trusted in the hands of the "simple faithful," but to be reserved to the inspection of spiritual guides, who should dispense it to the flock at second hand, if at all.

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#### SUFFICIENCY OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

THIS translation has now been in common use for two hundred and thirty-seven years. During that time, innumerable copies have had free course and circulation among the successive generations speaking the English tongue on either side of the Atlantic. During that time, the dynasty of England has changed once and again, America has become the greatest of republics, science has been even more repeatedly and thoroughly revolutionized than politics have been, the arts of life have almost effected a new creation of society, popular intelligence has brightened from its dawnings into the broad light of day, philosophy has restlessly traversed a thousand circles, and even theology has been rushing backward and forward through successive alternations, like a ship beating into port against wind and tide, and losing on one tack what it gains on the other. And yet this version, alone unchanged, remains unrivalled and unthreatened. Though here and there, some have murmured, and some have complained aloud, and some have put forth their skill in "improved" or "amended" versions, they have been wholly unheeded by the great mass of

readers. The common version was never more popular than now. It is in greater demand, more abundantly supplied by the press, more elaborately adorned by Christian art, and more widely spread abroad, than ever before. This among a people so intelligent, and cultivated, and eager for progress, is an unexampled popularity. There must be an inherent and amazing excellence in a work which keeps such fast hold upon the respect and veneration of a race of men, who shew but little conservatism in regard to any other object of general interest. While all else is falling away, the word of the Lord “liveth and abideth forever.”

The enduring popularity of the English translation may be in part accounted for by the personal character, the eminent scholarship, and the exalted piety, of its authors. The way had been well prepared for them by a succession of older translations, some of which were so excellent, that our Translators modestly say, in their Preface, that they did not “need to make a new translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one; but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones one principal good one.” Still, their work, though much assisted by the labors of the good men and martyrs who had wrought in the same line before them, is essentially original. And it was executed with such deliberation, diligence, and scrupulous care, that even the men who would fain supplant it with some production of their own, are compelled to extol it, as Balaam did the tabernacles of Jacob. Thus Dr. Geddes, in his Prospectus of a new translation issued in 1786, expresses himself as follows: “The highest eulogiums have been made on the translation of James I. both by our own writers and by foreigners; and indeed, if accuracy, fidelity, and the strictest attention to the letter of the text, be supposed to constitute the qualities of an excellent version, this of all versions must, in general, be accounted the most excellent. Every sentence, every word, every syllable, every letter and point, seem to have been weighed with the nicest exactitude, and expressed, either in the text or margin, with the greatest precision. Pagninus himself is hardly more literal; and it was well remarked by Robertson, above a hundred years ago, that it may serve for a lexicon of the Hebrew language, as well as for a translation.”

Other testimonies equally explicit can be given, from scholars who yet aspired to substitute for the common version something of their own. To these might be added authorities from the most

eminent scholars and critics, both lay and clerical, who have ever adorned the English name, extolling this incomparable work in the highest terms. A volume might be filled with such testimonies. Not that any one pretends to regard our version as absolutely perfect, or incapable of improvement in many detached particulars. But, taken as whole, our Translators have done the work so well, that the Christian public will not endure to have it tampered with. It would be impossible, at this day, to collect a body of professors and divines, in whose learning, soundness, and piety, the churches would feel sufficient confidence to entrust them with a commission to revise the work, or to do it over again. Another volume might be added, to exhibit the immense influence exerted by the common translation, on the language, manners, character, institutions, history, religion, and entire development of the Anglo-Saxon race in either hemisphere.

Taking into account, the many remarkable events in divine Providence which led to the preparation of this version, and aided in its accomplishment, and also that to uncounted millions, and to other millions yet to be born, it is the only safeguard from popery on the one side and from infidelity on the other, we are compelled to claim for the good men who made it the highest measure of divine aid short of plenary inspiration itself. We make this claim, regardless of the supercilious airs of fashionable Sadducees, or the pitying smiles of literary pantheists. Not that we regard the translators as at all inspired in the same sense as were the prophets, apostles, and other "holy men of old," who "were moved by the Holy Ghost" in drawing up the original documents of the Christian faith. Such inspiration is a thing by itself, like any other miracle; and belongs exclusively to those to whom it was given for that high and unequalled end. But we hold that the translators enjoyed the highest degree of that special divine guidance which is ever granted to God's true servants in exigencies of the utmost concernment to the kingdom of heaven.

Such special succors and spiritual assistances are always vouchsafed, where there is a like union of piety, of prayers, and of pains, combined to effect an object of such inconceivable importance to the Church of the living God. In such a juncture, God has never forsaken his people, nor left them to struggle on in their unaided weakness.

And the nature of their duty was such as to throw the translators, in a peculiar manner, upon divine support. It was their awful task so to render the Word of God, that it should faithfully speak his will to living millions, and to many millions more as yet unborn. Through their endeavors, the medium of communion with God was to be opened to multitudes whom no man can number, and who must avail themselves of it as their most reliable resource for ascertaining the way of eternal salvation. The necessity of a supernatural revelation to man of the divine will, has often been urged in favor of the extreme probability that such a revelation has been made. A like necessity, and one nearly as pressing, might be argued in favor of the belief, that this most important of all the versions of God's revealed will must have been made under his special guidance and his provident eye. And the manner in which that version has met the spiritual wants of the most free and intelligent nations in the old world and the new, may well confirm us in the belief, that the same illuminating Spirit which inspired the originals, was imparted in rich grace to aid and guard the preparation of the English version.

The readers of this admirable version shall do well, if they avail themselves of every help toward understanding it aright, as its authors intended it to be understood. But if they can have no other help than the book itself affords by prayerful study and comparison of scripture with scripture, they may rely on it as a safe teacher, and that they will never incur the displeasure of God by obeying it too strictly. Whosoever attempts to shake the confidence of the common people in the common version, puts their faith in dreadful danger of shipwreck. He is slipping the chain-cable of their sheet-anchor, and leaves their souls adrift among the breakers. Against all such attempts let them be fully warned, who can only hear the "lively oracles" of God address them "in their own tongue wherein they were born." Let them never doubt but that the All-merciful who has spoken to the human race at large to teach them his love, his will, and his salvation, has so cared for the souls of the more than forty civilized millions who now use the English speech, as to repeat to them his teachings in a form most sure and sufficient as to the whole round of faith and practice. The best fruits of Christianity have sprung from the seeds our translation has furnished.

## REVIEW.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT UNFOLDED, and its points of coincidence or disagreement with prevailing systems indicated, by SAMUEL DAVIDSON, LL. D. London, 1848.

THE author of this work explicitly states in his preface, that his object is not "to explain or defend the opinions and practices of any one denomination on the subject of ecclesiastical polity, nor to identify the polity of the New Testament with modern Congregationalism; but to investigate the volume of inspiration with the view of unfolding its teachings, and to point out their agreement or discordance, with the principles and usages of modern sects."

Notwithstanding all this, he arrives at Congregationalism, at least in its essential features, as the result of his investigations. Still in some things he widely differs from the theory and practice of New England Congregationalists. Some of the main points of difference we will state. They relate to the size of particular churches, the number of officers in each, the balance of power in each, and the extent to which councils should be used.

"All Christians in a town or city," he affirms, "should be one church, having several teachers and rulers in common, as was the case in Jerusalem." To this he admits no exception, until the size of the church becomes such that it is absolutely impossible to obtain a place sufficiently large to accommodate all, and capable of being filled with the human voice.

According to these principles, Christians in any town or city ought to form one church at least till they reach the number of four or five thousand, instead of being divided into several independent churches, with each its pastor and house of worship. In such large churches, there should be a corresponding number of pastors and teachers, in accordance, as he supposes, with the practice in the apostolic churches. These pastors would form what was called in the New Testament the presbytery of the church.

A large church thus organized might have under its care a number of chapels, in which its ministers might preach the gospel for the conversion of souls. But those thus converted should be added to the one church; and when the peculiar privileges of professing Christians are to be enjoyed, the entire church should meet in one place, for worship and ordinances.

This he considers as in accordance with Apostolic practice ; and he holds, that, under such a system, the people would be better instructed, pastoral visitations be more thoroughly performed, a greater impression be produced on the surrounding population, and the permanence of the pastoral office be promoted.

In a church thus organized with its presbytery, he teaches us, that there should be such a balance of power that "as long as they preside over a church, nothing done by that church in their absence is valid without them, except they have given their assent to such an arrangement." At the same time they cannot make any rules or regulations without the consent of the brethren. He quotes with approbation chapter X. § 11, of the Cambridge Platform: "That no church act can be consummated or perfected without the consent of both." Indeed, in stating the balance of powers between the presbytery and the brethren, he seems to have had his eye on the Cambridge Platform, and John Cotton's Keys, and to have closely followed them.

At the same time it is quite noticeable, that, whilst professing to rise above all present practice, in order to follow the rule of Scripture, he yet sustains those views of the balance of power by no Scriptural authority at all. He does not even refer to one passage of the word of God. The reason is plain. There is actually no support in the Scripture for his views. It results in his mind, in all probability, from a fear of representing the government of the church as a pure democracy. But certainly a power so great as a veto-power ought to rest on some better authority than mere human opinion as to what is expedient.

In answer to the objection, that a plurality of pastors could not be maintained in a large church of the kind described, without schisms and envyings, he suggests that one might be appointed as the presiding officer of the presbytery, through whom unity should be preserved. This he calls the incipient episcopal institute, and he raises the inquiry, whether it could not be resumed with advantage. He seems to despair of unity in the presbytery without it ; but thinks that in this way a church could reap all the benefits of a plurality of elders without its disadvantages. "Unity and condensation of effort would be attained. A powerful organization, under the wise subordination of one standing at the head of a college of elders, would work with well directed efforts in the accomplishment of important objects. Here would be

found the best elements of Congregationalism, Episcopacy, and Presbyterianism, without infringing any fundamental principle ; for there would still be ministerial parity *essentially*, subjection to a president being a *voluntary* arrangement on the part of the elders, and ambition being kept in check by such means as might be agreed on at the election of the bishops. The measure could be laid aside at any time should the church and elders see fit. It should have nothing compulsory about it. It should be nothing more than a voluntary submission of the elders belonging to a church, to a perpetual presidency on the part of one among them, elevated on account of superior qualifications or of age, or both."

In all this, he plainly goes beyond either the New Testament, or the Cambridge Platform, or John Cotton ; and introduces, on grounds of expediency, an arrangement which has been once tried with results too well known to all the world. But now the Congregational bishop is to be limited in his jurisdiction to the elders of one church, and to be so restrained that ambition shall have no sphere wherein to operate !

Such is an outline of his theory of the best organization of a Congregational church. The right of choosing their own officers he regards as so essentially and fundamentally belonging to the members of the church, from the very nature of a free community, that there is no need of revealed directions to that effect. The Bible assumes this as too obvious to need statement or proof.

His views of ordination are very definite. By the choice of the church, and his own acceptance of office, the pastor is *ipso facto*, and at once, invested with all the authority of office. Ordination does not confer office or power of any kind. It essentially consists in *the solemn invocation of the divine presence and assistance*. The laying on of hands merely designates the person prayed for. There is no mystery in the transaction. The efficacy of prayer in this case is the same as in any other.

But neither prayer nor the imposition of hands is essential as a mode of induction to the office of elder or deacon, since all that is properly meant by *ordination* is not necessary to give validity to office. Still it is expedient to retain these forms if they are properly explained, and all transmission of authority or mysterious influences by them is disclaimed.

In his view, the performance of the rite of ordination properly belongs to the presbytery of the church. If there be no presby-

tery, then the right reverts to the church, and they may choose whom they will of their own number, to lay on their hands, and to pray for the blessing of God on their pastor, and this will be full and perfect ordination. With this view, there is no objection to reordination as often as a pastor is called to preside over a new church. Still farther, if any person does not wish to be ordained at all, he has by his simple election ample power to perform all ministerial duties, and as the New Testament has not enjoined ordination as *necessary*, either by precept or by *uniform* example, "he cannot be styled disorderly who does not see it a duty to comply with the arrangement. In the eyes of a denomination, he may be irregular, but in other respects he is quite orderly." Still, "it is right to hold that the practice should be generally observed, for this is in accordance with Scripture."

He thinks that election and ordination should not be separated as two independent transactions, but should take place simultaneously. "Let the choice be formally and publicly declared, and the formalities of ordination forthwith succeed. Thus the entire appointment will be completed, and the office-bearer cease to occupy an ambiguous position in the eyes of those who have been accustomed to regard ordination as the conveyance of official authority, or of an indelible character. The importance of connecting election and ordination as parts of *one transaction*, or as making up together *the appointment* of an office-bearer, cannot be easily overrated. Much misconception has arisen from the unwarrantable separation of them into *two distinct transactions*."

Of course he would object to the American plan of ordaining by councils. He admits, indeed, that it has advantages, but he regards the disadvantages as preponderating. "Ordaining councils, and examinations of *candidates*, as they are called, too plainly betray a want of faith in the churches' judgment: for they come in as an adventitious agency to bolster and supplement the popular choice. They are a considerable approach to the principle of Presbyterianism, which is neither seemly nor scriptural." He fears that such councils may subvert the liberties of the churches.

In general he regards councils as too frequently called by the Congregationalists of New England. They should be sparingly summoned, and only in cases of great difficulty. He also objects to the practice of licensing by Associations; calling, ordaining, and dismissing ministers, and licensing candidates, is the proper work of the churches, and each is competent to manage its own affairs.

Of course he objects to all standing councils, and especially to the Connecticut consociations. They foster strife, are hostile to the liberties of the churches, and tend to Presbyterianism.

His views of the rights of the brethren are elevated. In common cases, the ordinances should be administered by the elders of the church. But if in extraordinary circumstances there are none, the members should observe all the ordinances, even in the absence of spiritual officers, because they are both competent and bound by duty to attend to them always. And the Lord's Supper, or baptism, when thus administered by laymen, are as valid as when administered by the pastor. There is no more mysterious sacredness about them, than there is about exhorting, and preaching, and teaching ; all of which lay brethren in certain cases may lawfully do. Still when there are officers in a church, it belongs to them to administer the ordinances.

From what has been said, it is plain that Dr. Davidson in his jealousy for the rights of particular churches, verges towards independency ; not indeed absolutely rejecting councils, but regarding them with great suspicion, and disposed to resort to them as rarely as possible. He opposes them decidedly, even in cases of dispute between pastor and people.

On the whole, he agrees exactly with no writer, and with the practice of no body of men. His work is what it professes to be, an original and independent investigation of the whole subject. As such, any large-minded man may read it with pleasure and advantage. It indicates great learning and extensive reading, not only of English, but of German, authors.

We give this sketch of Dr. Davidson's opinions, on account of the importance ascribed to his book by our British brethren. His work throws much incidental light on the present state of the Congregational churches in Old England. But it would have been better and more wisely written, had the author been well informed as to the actual working of our system in New England. Here only, from the very beginning, have the principles of Congregationalism had a free and untrammelled development. The rights of our churches remain wholly unimpaired by the Associations and councils of which Dr. Davidson is so jealous. And each member enjoys a higher share of personal liberty, and freer scope for spiritual activity than if merged in one of Dr. Davidson's mammoth churches, with its monster meetings, and its bishop and his presbytery armed with veto-powers.

## REVIEW.

POPULAR OBJECTIONS TO UNITARIAN CHRISTIANITY CONSIDERED AND ANSWERED; in seven Discourses. By GEORGE W. BURNAP, Pastor of the first Independent Church of Baltimore. 1848.

WE have run our eye over these discourses, and find nothing of very special interest in any of them, except the last. It would be easy to pursue the author, and to expose him on a thousand points; but we are not sure that the play would be worth the candle, and we desist. We pass over the first six discourses, and confine our attention to the seventh, which, however, has nothing to do with "popular objections to Unitarian Christianity."

The object of this discourse is to shew, that "Dr. Watts was a Unitarian." Mr. Burnap allows that "Watts was educated a Trinitarian and a Calvinist of the strongest stamp," and that "these sentiments are woven into all his Psalms and Hymns." But later in life, he reexamined the subject, and his "last thoughts were completely Unitarian."

Mr. Burnap's arguments to prove Dr. Watts a Unitarian are drawn almost entirely from his published works; and we shall, first, go into a consideration of the quotations he has given.

It is proved, from these quotations, that Dr. Watts did not regard the Holy Ghost as altogether "a distinct spirit from the Father,"—"a distinct intelligent Being,"—"another conscious mind." And what Trinitarian ever did so regard him? A Trinitarian is not a Tritheist nor a Dualist.

It is further proved from these quotations, that Dr. Watts rejected what has been called the *eternal generation* of the Son of God, and the *eternal procession* of the Spirit. And in this he is supported by very many Trinitarians of the present day.

Dr. Watts insisted on the propriety of "offering a doxology to the Spirit, and ascribing divine honor and glory to him, together with the Father, and the Son." He argues this point at considerable length; and Mr. Burnap gives us the substance of his argument. This, surely, does not look much like Unitarianism.

Mr. Burnap further quotes Dr. Watts as saying: "I believe the Spirit of God to be coëternal with God, and necessary to his very Being, and in that sense *true God*. And since he is represented in Scripture in a *personal manner*, or under the character of a *distinct person*, therefore, forms of praise may be lawfully addressed to him."

While Dr. Watts rejected what he called "the scholastic, popish explication of the manner of the *derivation* of the Son and Spirit, as the most inconceivable and indefensible of all the common, orthodox scheme of the Trinity," "I heartily agree," he adds, "to several other parts of it; viz., that God is one infinite, eternal Spirit, or conscious Being. That the Divine essence is but one and the same, though *distinguished into three sacred persons*." It will be remembered that these extracts are taken from Mr. Burnap's *quotations*; — the same which he selected for the purpose of proving Dr. Watts a Unitarian.

That Dr. Watts entertained some peculiar views relative to the person of Christ is freely admitted; but these went, not to degrade the Saviour, but rather to exalt him. He held, in the first place, to the strict and proper divinity of Christ. He held also to the preëxistence and to the vastly exalted nature of Christ's *human soul*; — that in respect to this, he was literally "the first born of every creature;" "the beginning of the creation of God." The Sonship of Christ Dr. Watts referred exclusively to his humanity. Hence, as Son of God, though exalted far above every other creature, he was less than the Father.

This helps to explain a passage in one of Dr. Watts's letters to Dr. Colman of Boston, which has been often quoted to prove the writer a Unitarian. "I could not go so far as to say, with some of our orthodox divines, that *the Son is equal with the Father*; because our Lord himself expressly says, *My Father is greater than I.*" Understanding by *the Son* no other than the *human nature* of Christ, Watts could not say that the Son was equal with the Father. But in addition to the human nature, he held, as we shall see, that our Saviour possessed a strictly divine nature; or that he was, in the most strict and proper sense of the term, *God-Man*. Keeping this latter fact, so far as possible, out of sight, Mr. Burnap has introduced a variety of quotations to shew that, in the estimation of Dr. Watts, the Son of God was not "consubstantial, coëqual, and coëternal with the Father." But, in view of the explanation above given, how much do such quotations prove? And what are we to think of the fairness of introducing them?

Finally, Mr. Burnap undertakes to prove that Watts was a Unitarian, by an appeal to his solemn "Address to the Deity." We also appeal to the same document; and if, after reading the

following passages, any person can persuade himself that Watts was a Unitarian, we know not what arguments would convince him to the contrary. "Hast thou not ascribed divine names, and titles, and characters to thy Son, and thy Holy Spirit, in thy word, as well as assumed them to thyself? And hast thou not appointed to them such glorious offices, as cannot be executed, without something of Divinity or *true Godhead* in them?" Speaking of Christ in this prayer, Dr. Watts says: "I believe he is a man, in whom dwells *all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. I believe he is *one with God*; he is *God manifested in the flesh*; and that the man Jesus is so closely and inseparably united with the true and eternal Godhead, as to become *one person*, even as the soul and body make one man." If a prayer such as this may with propriety be quoted to prove that its author was a Unitarian, what could he have said, that would prove him a Trinitarian?

We have now done with Mr. Burnap's proofs of the Unitarianism of Dr. Watts; and were we inclined to go into the subject only so far as he has done, we might with propriety leave it here. But others besides Mr. Burnap have insisted that Dr. Watts was a Unitarian; and it may be interesting to inquire what further evidence has been adduced in support of such an opinion.

The celebrated Dr. Lardner, a cotemporary of Watts, a dissenting London minister, and a Unitarian, is reported to have said, that "for several years before his death, Dr. Watts was a Unitarian;" and that "his last thoughts were completely Unitarian." Dr. Lardner founded his opinion, partly upon certain *unpublished manuscripts* of Dr. Watts, and partly on *the testimony of a Mr. Neal*, who was a son of Daniel Neal, the historian of the Puritans, and a nephew of Dr. Lardner. We propose to examine both these sources of evidence.

The manuscripts of Watts were entrusted to Doctors Jennings and Doddridge, "to publish or suppress, as they should judge best." He had himself personally requested these gentlemen to take charge of them, and the same trust was committed to them in his Will. He had made Dr. Jennings acquainted with the number and character of his manuscripts "three or four years" before his death; and at the time of making his Will, two years before his death, he arranged them under eight specific heads, a complete list of which was afterwards published by Mr. Palmer. Three out of the eight unpublished collections were on the subject

of the Trinity; but that neither of them contained sentiments at all different from those which appear in the last published works of the author, we have complete proof. For, in the first place, they were all written *previous* to his own last publications on the same subject. If written, “*three or four years*” before the author’s death, according to the testimony of Dr. Jennings, they must have been written as early as the year 1745. At any rate, they were written previous to July, 1746, which is the date of the Will. But it was near *the close* of 1746, that Dr. Watts published his last work, on “*the Glory of Christ*.” consequently, his *unpublished* manuscripts, whatever they may have been, did not contain his *last* thoughts on the subject.

But one of the three manuscripts respecting the Trinity, and the *last of them*, has since been published, and is found to contain nothing different from the work on “*the Glory of Christ*.” It also appears from the titles of the other two, as given by Mr. Palmer, that they were in the same strain, going to show “*the ill effects of incorporating the Divine doctrine of the Trinity with the human explications of it*;” or in other words, to set forth, as we may presume, the supposed advantages of his own peculiar “*explications*.” But, by the way, strange phraseology this for a Unitarian, “*the divine doctrine of the Trinity!*”

Dr. Lardner saw some of the manuscripts of which we speak, and had they clearly disclosed that Watts was a Unitarian, he would, we doubt not, have insisted on their publication. But instead of this, he says: “*They were not fit to be published*. Dr. Watts had never been used to a proper way of reasoning on such a subject.” Another “gentleman of veracity, who had seen the manuscripts, assured” Mr. Palmer, “that they appeared to him to contain *nothing new*, being only a farther illustration of Dr. Watts’s sentiments concerning the Trinity, which he had published to the world.”

We turn now to the testimony of Mr. Neal, as reported by Dr. Lardner. “*My nephew, Neal, an understanding gentleman, was intimate with Dr. Watts, and with the family where he lived. Sometimes, in an evening, when they were alone, he would talk to his friends in the family of his new thoughts concerning the person of Christ, and their great importance, and that if he should be able to recommend them to the world, it would be the most considerable thing that ever he performed. My nephew,*

therefore, came to me, and told me of it, and that the family was greatly concerned to hear him talk so much of the importance of these sentiments."

Such was the story of Mr. Neal, as reported by Dr. Lardner ; and having passed through several Unitarian hands, it was published, at length, by Mr. Belsham, in his Memoirs of Lindsay. But taking the account just as it stands, what evidence does it furnish in support of Dr. Lardner's conclusion, that "the last thoughts of Dr. Watts were completely Unitarian ?" Obviously, none at all. Could not Dr. Watts, in his old age, cherish any "new thoughts concerning the person of Christ," and thoughts which seemed to him of "great importance," without becoming a Unitarian ? The truth is, Dr. Watts *did*, in the latter part of his life, entertain some "new thoughts concerning the person of Christ," which he unfolded in his last publications ; but these thoughts he believed, and strenuously insisted, were entirely consistent with the supreme divinity of his Lord and Saviour.

We mean not, in aught we have said, to charge Dr. Lardner with intentional misrepresentation ; but he evidently drew a wrong conclusion from the testimony of Mr. Neal. In proof that he did, Mr. Palmer appeals to the different members of Lady Abney's family, in which Dr. Watts lived and died. He appeals "to the Rev. Thomas Taylor, who was for many years a chaplain in this family ;" to "Mr. Joseph Parker, his (Watts's) amanuensis, who was constantly with him ;" and to Lady Abney herself : neither of whom had the least reason to suppose, from aught they saw or heard, that Dr. Watts ever adopted any sentiments relative to the person of Christ, different from those contained in his last publications. Mr. Palmer refers also to Dr. Gibbons and Dr. Stennett, both of whom visited Watts but a short time before his death. "So far," says Dr. Stennett, "from having embraced the Socinian system, he expressed his firm belief in the doctrine of Christ's atonement, and lamented, even with tears, that so many should have given it up." In strict accordance with this, adds Mr. Palmer, "is the epitaph which Dr. Watts ordered to be inscribed on his tomb-stone : IN UNO JESU OMNIA,— *In Jesus alone is my all.*" It should be remarked too, that Dr. Jennings, a thoroughly orthodox divine, and one of those who were entrusted with Dr. Watts's manuscripts, preached at his funeral, and afterwards published the sermon, in which he speaks of the religious

character of his departed friend in the most exalted terms ; — a thing which he certainly would not have done, had he discovered from the manuscripts, or from any other source, that Watts became a Unitarian. Indeed, Mr. Belsham himself, who brings forward and arrays the evidence from Lardner, does not appear to consider it of much force, or to believe that Dr. Watts ever supposed himself a Unitarian. "There can be little doubt," says he, "that, owing to early prejudice, he (Watts) would, to the latest day of his life, have started from the imputation with horror."

It has been often said, that Dr. Watts, at his decease, left a corrected copy of his Psalms and Hymns, from which he had expunged all those expressions which speak of the Trinity, and the Divinity of Christ. But of this pretended fact, there is absolutely no evidence. What became of the copy thus corrected ? Mr. Palmer assures us that Dr. Watts's amanuensis, without whose assistance nothing was done, "knew of no such thing, and never heard of the author's having such a design." This report, then, is without foundation.

It has been alleged again, that Dr. Watts was dissatisfied with some of his hymns, and *wished* to make alterations ; but that, having disposed of the copy-right, his book-seller would not suffer them to be corrected. That Dr. Watts may have wished to alter some of his hymns is not improbable. They were written and published in early life, and it is not strange that, after long use, alterations and improvements should be suggested to him. Indeed, he has told us that this was the fact. "I wish some things were corrected." But does it follow from this, that Dr. Watts had become a Unitarian, and wished to expurgate his Psalms and Hymns of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity ? By no means. There is no evidence of his having ever indulged such a thought, but abundant evidence, as we shall now shew, to the contrary.

Dr. Watts died November 25th, 1748. In the beginning of the year 1746, he published a work, entitled "Useful and Important Questions concerning Jesus Christ, the Son of God ;" and near the close of the same year, another work, entitled "The Glory of Christ, as God-Man ; displayed in three Discourses." These were his *last publications*, and may be regarded as an expression of his *last thoughts*, respecting the person of the Saviour. His unpublished papers on the subject of the Trinity were all written, as we have shewn, previous to the publication of

these works. One of these, and the latest of them, entitled, "A faithful Inquiry after the Ancient and Original Doctrine of the Trinity," was published in 1802. From these three works, we shall now make copious extracts. In view of them, the public will judge, whether Dr. Watts was not to the last, a firm believer in the doctrine of the Trinity, and in the proper divinity of Christ.

### 1. THE "FAITHFUL INQUIRY."

"It is evident that Christ is often called God in Scripture; and since he is *true God*, as well as man, we have plain directions from Scripture to suppose, that this man Christ Jesus has *the true Godhead united to him*, or dwelling in him in a peculiar manner, so that they are often represented as one complex person."

"The doctrine of *the blessed Trinity*, or of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with their peculiar characters and offices, is *a special doctrine of the Christian religion*. This sacred Three in the Trinity are plainly represented in Scripture, and have generally been represented by Christian writers, like *three persons*, or *three distinct personal agents*; as acting different parts, and sustaining different characters, in the affairs of our salvation. And yet it seems to be abundantly evident also in Scripture, that they are all three represented as having *true and proper Deity some way belonging to them*, and that the names, titles, attributes, and operations of Godhead are ascribed to the three, both in the Old Testament and in the New. This is *the substance of the doctrine itself, as revealed in the Bible*; and the writers on the Trinity have so often proved it, that I need not repeat the proofs."

### 2. THE "USEFUL AND IMPORTANT QUESTIONS."

In the Preface to this work, Dr. Watts says, that "he freely and delightfully confesses these following Articles, borrowed from the Athanasian creed, viz. "We believe and confess that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is *both God and man*; God, of the same substance with the Father; a man, of the substance of his mother; born into the world *perfect God*, and *perfect man*; of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting together; *equal to the Father as touching his Godhead*, and yet inferior to the Father, as touching his manhood; *one*, not by conversion of the Godhead into the flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God, so as to become *one personal agent*, or *one person*:— and as the reasonable soul and flesh is *one man*, so *God and man are one Christ*, who suffered for our salvation." In the body of this work he says: "We may justly call Jesus Christ God manifest in the flesh: a man, 'in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; a man of the seed of David, and yet God over all blessed forever.'"

### 3. THE GLORY OF CHRIST AS GOD-MAN.

The very title of this work, *the last* of Dr. Watts's publications on the subject, is decisive as to the question now before us. "The

Glory of Christ as *God-Man* displayed ! ” and from beginning to end, the work is conformable to its title.

“ It is very evident to me, that our blessed Saviour is often represented in Scripture as a complex person, wherein *God and man are united*, so as to make up one complex agent, one intellectual compound being; *God, joined with man*, so as to become one common principle of action and passion.” Preface, P. iii.

“ Though we learn from Scripture, that *true and proper Deity is ascribed to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, and they are represented often in Scripture as *distinct personal agents*, yet, after all our inquiries and prayers, we may be still much at a loss to determine exactly wherein this distinct personality consists, and what is the distinct communion of each of them in the Divine nature. We have never yet been able, with any strong evidence and clear certainty, precisely to adjust this sacred difficulty, *how far they are one, and how far they are three.*” P. iv.

“ All that I pretend to maintain here is, that our blessed Saviour must be *God*, and he must be *man*; *God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person.*” P. v.

“ There is not one sentence in all these discourses, but what is very consistent with a firm belief of *the Divinity of Christ*, and a just and sincere concern for the most eminent and glorious truths of the gospel as they are professed by Protestants among us, against *the Socinian and Arian errors.*” P. vii.

The first Discourse in this work is entitled “ A Survey of the Visible Appearances of Christ, as *God*, before his incarnation ; ” and the drift of the whole is, through almost a hundred pages, that *the Jehovah of Israel*, in all his visible appearances under the former dispensation, was no other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

“ The Angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus, is *God himself*, is intimately and personally *united to Godhead*, and is *one with God*; because he assumes Divine names and titles, and speaks the words which can belong only to God.” P. 75.

“ The denying of these glorious and sublime titles of Jehovah, the Lord God, the God of Israel, etc. to belong to Christ, or the interpreting of them in such a diminished and inferior sense, as may belong to a mere inferior spirit, a contingent or created being, without any personal union to Godhead, seems to run contrary to the most plain and obvious sense and meaning, both of the sacred writers, of the ancient Jews, and the Primitive Christians.” P. 98.

“ The union of *the Divine and human natures* in the complete person of Christ, is one of those sublime wonders which could never have been found out by the reason of man, and which were revealed slowly to the church in succeeding ages. But in these latter days, we have a most evident and certain revelation made to us, that Christ Jesus the Mediator, who was of the seed of David according to the flesh, is ‘ *God over all, blessed forever.*’ ” P. 99.

"We know that Jesus Christ is *true God*, and that his human nature is united to the Divine. The sacred doctrine of the Divinity, united to the human nature in Christ, ought to be supported by all just expositions of Scripture. It is an article that WE CANNOT PART WITH OUT OF OUR RELIGION, WITHOUT SHAKING THE FOUNDATIONS." Pp. 102, 103.

"*I am well assured of the doctrine of the Deity of Christ, from many Scriptures*; so if there be anything which I have asserted that runs counter to that doctrine, I desire it to be expunged and forgiven." P. 232.

Quotations of a similar character to those here given might be multiplied to any extent. To feel the force of them it must be kept in mind, that they are from the *last publications* of Dr. Watts on the subject, and exhibit "*the last authentic account of his sentiments*, as avowed by himself." He made this avowal of them, long after his controversies with Bradbury, and with Tomkins, an Arian; after the time when Dr. Lardner supposes he became a Unitarian; and indeed but a few months previous to the confinement which terminated in his death. And he left no writing or declaration, of which we have any knowledge, which goes at all to contradict, or even to modify, the views here expressed. On the contrary, if we may credit the worthy family in which he lived and died; if we may credit those who were with him in his last sickness; if we may credit the venerable clergyman who preached at his funeral; if we may credit his own words; he held fast his integrity to the end, and continued faithful unto death.

With what justice or propriety, then, is it said, and repeated, that Dr. Watts renounced his orthodoxy, and that "*his last thoughts were completely Unitarian?*" With what propriety are the old surmises and glosses, which have been so often-times refuted, paraded forth about once every dozen years, to support so grave a slander of the holy dead? The Unitarians profess to despise authority in matters of faith, and yet will even steal the good name of the pious dead, though the theft is so sure to be detected and chastised. We do not ourselves accept Dr. Watts's peculiar "*explications*" of the doctrine of the Trinity; still, if Mr. Burnap and his Unitarian brethren were only such as he, we would have no more controversy with them. We would gladly give them the right hand of fellowship. We would bid them God speed, in every work of faith and labor of love. Even more; we would come and sit at their feet, and hear them discourse of "*the Glory of Christ,*" and sound forth,—as did Watts with his living and his dying breath, the wonders of redeeming love.

## OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

HON. S. A. ELIOT'S HISTORY OF HARVARD COLLEGE.—This work, and an elaborate review of it in the Christian Examiner, from the pen of Rev. G. E. Ellis, may be taken as samples of the way in which our Unitarian brethren politely apologize to their own consciences for the sin of embezzling and perverting a State institution to their sectarian purposes. Mr. Eliot repeats all the quibbles of President Quincy as to that outrage upon moral honesty, the perversion of the Hollis divinity fund to the support of a Unitarian professor; notwithstanding that those quibbling misstatements were so thoroughly "detected and exposed" in the first volume of the *OBSERVATORY*. Mr. Eliot would argue, that Hollis did not intend by "sound and orthodox principles" what that expression now means, because he was opposed to religious tests in a certain case in England; as though the same were not still the case with all the staunch Calvinistic Dissenters in that country, who, owing to the old "Test Act" and other impositions of a State religion, have almost a morbid jealousy in regard to such matters.—Mr. Eliot has the temerity to assert that "not a dollar given to the College has ever gone to the Theological School." Whereas it is notorious, whatever may be the case now, that much of the instruction, and some of the subsistence, of the divinity students has been derived from the College professors and endowments.—Mr. Ellis, in his review, says that the "Liberal party," when it found itself entrenched in full possession of the College, "resolved to maintain the position" they had obtained by the arts of intrigue and concealment, "from an honest and reasonable conviction, that rights which they held sacred would be encroached upon, if abandoned to the other party." Here is some fine-rigged morality for you! Stripped of its Unitarian feathers it would read thus: "Now I have the chance, I will take the initiative in playing the rogue: I will cheat that fellow out of his just rights, for fear that if he gets what belongs to him, it may enable him to cheat me!" We trust that, if ever the orthodox shall recover their rights, they will not abuse them, however tempted by the example which that Unitarian corporation has been setting us for the last forty years.—Mr. Ellis says: "There never has been a period in which some of the offices of instruction and government were not held, as now, by Trinitarians." This statement is as true as that there is silver in Missouri lead, from a ton of which enough of the precious metal might be obtained to make a tea-spoon! Such an assertion is an insult to all the Trinitarians in the commonwealth. Judging from what they have done, it is all but certain that the present Corporation will never appoint a permanent instructor whose character and abilities would be likely to inspire the undergraduates with much respect for his sentiments.—If anything more were needed to prove the sectarianism of that Board, it might be found in their acceptance of a legacy of several thousand dollars from a Henry Lienow, given, in express terms, "FOR THE FURTHERANCE OF THE UNITARIAN FAITH." A trust, no doubt, carefully fulfilled. But what if donations were to be offered for the promotion of Episcopacy, or Cal-

vinism, or simply Trinitarianism? Would they accept the trust? Or accepting it, would it be with any other intent than to pervert it, as they have so many others? Let eternal infamy rest upon such dishonesty; and everlasting shame upon the wretched sophistry which attempts its justification!

**THE CHILD'S COMMENTATOR ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.**—This work is reprinted from a London edition, in four compact and beautiful volumes, by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society. The American editor, Rev. A. R. Baker of Medford, has introduced numerous improvements and illustrations, both printed and pictured, adapting the work more fully to the wants of our own families and Sabbath Schools. We have often thought, that a commentary on the Bible, condensed, simple, and practical, prepared expressly for the young, would be a most valuable help in the sacred duty of domestic religious instruction. Such a work would also be of great value in aiding children to understand their Sabbath lessons, and to learn the proper answers to the questions in their class-books. We trust that the volumes before us will fully answer these purposes; and that having had a wide circulation in old England, they may prove valuable immigrants to this country, especially as they have been duly naturalized at the proper office. They actually speak as good English as we do! and no one could distinguish them from "native Americans."

**BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.**—This work, like all things in nature, is "beautiful in its season." And we rejoice to learn that it has taken so deep root in the favor of the literary republic, that it promises to be a well-rooted standard, whose fruit shall furnish food for years to come. The Bibliotheca is a most welcome visitor to him "whose study is his paradise, which he leaves only to perform some good office." And to him who, like Dr. Thomas Goodwin, not content with superficial knowledge, "loves to study a subject down." It is under the conduct of ripe and profound scholars and men of taste, in whom the smoke from the lamp of science has not dimmed the lamp of devotion. Their labors are exceedingly helpful to the preacher, who, as Dr. Harris said two hundred years ago, "hath three books to study; the Bible, himself, and his people." Each of these books is duly commented upon, in the exegetical, philosophical, and historical articles of this noble quarterly. Nor is its interest by any means confined to ministers, though to them it is almost as necessary as a second coat. It is no less valuable to the man of cultivated mind, who would at least preach to himself, and would teach his own soul what to know, and how to know it. Success to the Bibliotheca Sacra!

**REV. E. N. KIRK'S HOME MISSIONARY SERMON.**—It is the object of this discourse to shew that "the church is essential to the republic," as the chief conservative power therein. The subject has been much discussed, but we have never seen it treated more judiciously. Moreover, it is to our apprehension, much the most satisfactory and interesting of all the discourses which the accomplished author

has committed to the press. It instructs, stimulates, and cheers the Christian reader; and urges on the good work of establishing throughout our newer States those institutions, which, wherever they are planted, prove to be the salt of the earth, and the only reliable preservative against the disorganizing and barbarizing tendencies of human corruption.

**SEWALL'S SKETCHES OF ST. AUGUSTINE, IN FLORIDA.**—As we are very often applied to, both verbally and by letter, for an opinion as to the benefit likely to result from a change of climate to persons affected with pulmonary diseases, we may as well say something on the subject here. Having felt great advantage from it in our own case, and witnessed it in the case of very many patients who came under our notice during a three years abode in Florida, we feel great confidence in it in all *recent* cases where the symptoms do not indicate a rapid course of disease. Though we have known some instances of recovery, in cases so desperate as to border well on the marvellous, yet to those who have consumption *seated* on them, and whose whole constitution is going to wreck, our advice is that they remain at home, in the bosom of their families, and, amid the soothing attentions of friends and relatives, prepare for the dissolution of the earthly tabernacle. Most persons, however, defer the time of their departure to the milder clime too long, or go when the disease has rushed towards its end with such celerity as nearly to have finished its course. They go to die among strangers, or while on their homeward way. The frequency of this result has brought the practice into disrepute. But there are abundant facts to prove, that where pulmonary disease is in its incipient stage, and where there is no irresistible propensity to it in the constitution, a residence at the South operates in the most kind and healing manner. Still, even of these, very many lose all that they have gained, by returning to the North too soon, as they are strongly tempted to do. Most of them, to derive permanent benefit from that genial air, should stay there, if possible, over the second winter. Of all the health retreats of which we have heard, we give the decided preference to Florida; and this not only because the invalid will there be among his own countrymen, and within easy and frequent means of intercourse with home, but because he may there, by a day or two of travel in different directions, obtain several minor changes of air, of which he may ascertain by trial which is most congenial to his own peculiar state. For further information on this subject, we would refer to Mr. Sewall's "Sketches of St. Augustine, with a view of its History and Advantages as a Resort for Invalids." This is a small and neat volume, just issued by G. P. Putnam, of New York. Perhaps it may tend to increase general confidence in the statements of this book, to mention that seven hundred copies of it, sent to St. Augustine, were demanded and destroyed by an excited popish mob for uttering too much truth about them to be agreeable. The writer's life was threatened in the streets, and he owed his safety to an escort of ladies. We believe that he has "shaken off the dust of his feet as a testimony" against his persecutors, and "fled to another city."

## MONTHLY RECORD.

*Congregationalism in New York.* — The Hammond Street Church in this great Nineveh, formerly pertaining to the Old School Presbyterians, has been reconstituted as a Congregational Church, under very promising auspices; and has called Rev. Dr. William Patton, formerly a New School Presbyterian of great note, to be its pastor. Who knows but that Congregationalism may prove to be a grand solvent for melting down the animosities between the two branches of the Presbyterian Church? — Another church of our free and active order is to be organized on the Second Avenue, and promises to start in full-grown vigor at its first formation. The more that Congregationalism is known and understood, the more will its liberal and scriptural character, so suited to the genius of our institutions, commend it to the regards of our free-spirited and intelligent countrymen.

*New Papers in New York.* — The New School, or, as they prefer to be called, the Constitutional Presbyterians, have taken measures to establish a religious paper, as their organ, in the city of New York. It is to be called the *Annalist*, and Professor Stowe is invited to place himself within the embracing arms of the editorial chair. — The Congregationalists also have made large provision for a new paper to sustain their growing interests. What is to be its specific character we know not, except that it is to be extremely vivacious. May it help on the millenium, and last to the end of it!

## ORDINATIONS.

- . Sep. 28. Mr. Eliphal Maynard, at New Britain, Con., as a Missionary to the Jews.
- Oct. 17. Mr. Newell A. Prince, New Gloucester, Me.
- “ 18. Mr. Royal Parkinson, Cape Elizabeth, Me.
- “ 25. Mr. Gordon Hall, Wilton, Con.
- Nov. 1. Mr. H. Lyman, at Castleton, Vt., as a Missionary to Oregon.
- “ 5. Mr. Charles Parker, at New York, as an Evangelist.
- “ 8. Mr. E. B. Huntington, Wilkinson, Con.
- “ 10. Mr. H. M. Stone, Bluehill, Me.

## INSTALLATIONS.

- Oct. 12. Rev. Thomas Harris, Mt. Sinai, Long Island, N. Y.
- “ 18. Rev. A. A. Whitmore, North Ashburnham, Ms.
- “ “ Rev. James Hazen, South Parish, Williamstown, Ms.
- No. 22. Rev. James Aiken, Gloucester, Ms.
- “ “ Rev. A. W. Mc Clure, Malden, Ms.

## DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

- Sep. 3. Rev. Benjamin Burge, Enfield, N. H. æ. 36.
- “ 23. Rev. Marshall H. Eames, Claridon, Ohio, æ. 36.
- Oct. 16. Rev. Samuel Gay, Hubbardston, Ms. æ. 63.
- “ 19. Rev. Eliphalet Gillett, D. D., Hallowell, Me. æ. 80.

## TESTIMONIALS.

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THE subscribers hereby express their conviction, that a periodical of the character of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY is demanded by the wants of the religious community; and they heartily commend it to the members of evangelical congregations, and to all with whom their opinion may have influence. It is their purpose, also, to contribute to its pages, so far as their duties and engagements will permit.

N. ADAMS,	GEORGE A. OVIATT,
S. AIKEN,	AUSTIN PHELPS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,	GEO. RICHARDS,
EDWARD BEECHER,	WM. M. ROGERS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,	M. HALE SMITH,
EDWARD N. KIRK,	J. B. WATERBURY.

BOSTON, OCTOBER 29, 1846.

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Manchester, Feb. 21, 1848.

I should do wrong to myself, did I not express my hearty approval of the OBSERVATORY. I love its thorough-going, unbending, Puritan character, its unflinching advocacy of the "old paths," and firm adherence to "sound doctrine" in these days of *slippery* theology. May it live and flourish, so long as there is work to be done for the defence of the truth.

B. F. NORTHRUP.

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THE subscribers, having been constant readers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, can cheerfully recommend it to the Christian public as a sound, able, and judicious publication. It is well adapted to the times, and worthy of extensive patronage.

B. TYLER,  
E. W. HOOKER,  
W. THOMPSON.

EAST WINDSOR HILL, Jan. 10th, 1848.

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*Rev. Dr. Woodbridge, of Hadley, Mass.*

The character, objects and execution of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY are, in the opinion of the subscriber, such as to give it a just title to the warm and extensive patronage of the friends of evangelical truth, of the primitive order of the New England churches, of the junction of liberty with conservatism, and of practical and experimental piety.

JOHN WOODBRIDGE.

## CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

### VOLUME FIRST.

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THE first volume of this work, for 1847, contains a series of articles on the Inspiration of the Bible ; another on the use and necessity of creeds ; another exposing the mistakes and misstatements, in disparagement of Orthodoxy, made by ex-president Quincy in his History of Harvard College ; and another of lives and sketches of eminent Puritans. Besides these, there is a great variety of articles and reviews, none long, and many short and condensed, relating to subjects of religious and practical interest. The whole forms a handsome volume, combining utility with entertainment. It may be had, on application at this office, neatly bound in cloth, at very moderate terms.

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### VOLUME SECOND.

THE second volume of this work contains a series of articles on the common English translation of the Bible, including a more full account than has ever before been given of the eminent scholars by whom it was made. It has another series affording a minute history of the rise and progress of Unitarianism in New England. There are also numerous articles of general interest, on important subjects relating to morals and religion. The volume may be had at this office, bound to match with the first, or singly.

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### VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

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